

ARIZONA HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Fifty-fifth Legislature - Second Regular Session

HOUSE COMMERCE COMMITTEE OF REFERENCE

Report of Interim Meeting
Tuesday, January 11, 2022
House Hearing Room 3 -- UPON REC. OR ADJ. OF REG. COMMERCE MEETING

Convened 2:53 P.M.

Recessed

Reconvened

Adjourned 4:20 P.M.

MINUTES RECEIVED
CHIEF CLERK'S OFFICE

1-14-22

Members Present

Representative Weninger, Chairman
Representative Carter
Representative Chávez
Representative Cook
Representative Espinoza
Representative Kaiser
Representative Liguori
Representative Meza
Representative Wilmeth

Members Absent

Agenda

Original Agenda – Attachment 1

Request to Speak

Report – Attachment 2

Committee Attendance

Report – Attachment 3

Presentations

Name

Marc Owen
Rosa Ellis

Organization

Office of the Auditor General
Office of the Auditor General

Attachments (Handouts)

Committee Action

Action

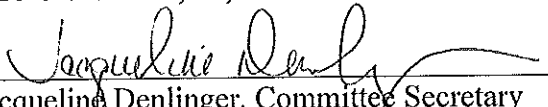
Continue Dept of Real Estate for 8 years
Continue Dept of Tourism for 8 years
Continue Board of Funeral Directors 2 years
Continue Commission on the Arts 8 years

Vote

9-0-0-1
9-0-0-1
10-0-0-0
10-0-0-0

Attachments

4, 5, 6
7, 8, 9
10, 11
12, 13, 14


Jacqueline Denlinger, Committee Secretary

January 14, 2022

(Original attachments on file in the Office of the Chief Clerk; video archives available at <http://www.azleg.gov>)

convened 2:55pm
adjourned 4:20pm

ARIZONA HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

INTERIM MEETING NOTICE OPEN TO THE PUBLIC

HOUSE COMMERCE COMMITTEE OF REFERENCE

Date: Tuesday, January 11, 2022
Time: Upon Rec. or Adj. of Reg. Commerce Meeting
Place: HHR 3

AGENDA

1. Call to Order
2. Sunset Review of the Arizona Department of Real Estate
 - Presentation by the Arizona Office of the Auditor General
 - Presentation by the Arizona Department of Real Estate
 - Public Testimony
 - Discussion and Recommendation

continue agency for 8 years
9-0-0-1
3. Sunset Review of the Arizona Office of Tourism
 - Presentation by the Arizona Office of the Auditor General
 - Presentation by the Arizona Office of Tourism
 - Public Testimony
 - Discussion and Recommendation

continue agency for 8 years
9-0-0-1
4. Sunset Review of the Arizona Board of Funeral Directors and Embalmers
 - Presentation by the Arizona Office of the Auditor General
 - Presentation by the Arizona Board of Funeral Directors and Embalmers
 - Public Testimony
 - Discussion and Recommendation

continue agency for 2 years
10-0-0-0
5. Sunset Review of the Arizona Commission on the Arts
 - Presentation by the Arizona Commission on the Arts
 - Public Testimony
 - Discussion and Recommendation

continue agency for 8 years
10-0-0-0
6. Adjourn

Members:

Representative Jeff Weninger, Chair
Representative Joseph Chaplik, Vice-Chair
Representative Neal Carter
Representative César Chávez
Representative David L. Cook

Representative Diego Espinoza
Representative Steve Kaiser
Representative Sarah Liguori
Representative Robert Meza
Representative Justin Wilmeth

01/04/2022
DF

People with disabilities may request reasonable accommodations such as interpreters, alternative formats, or assistance with physical accessibility. If you require accommodations, please contact the Chief Clerk's Office at (602) 926-3032 or through Arizona Relay Service 7-1-1.

Information Registered on the Request to Speak System

House Commerce Committee of Reference (1/11/2022)

2. Sunset Review of the Arizona Department of Real Estate

Support:

Louis Dettorre, Legislative Liaison, Arizona Department of Real Estate, AZ DEPT OF REAL ESTATE; victoria martinez, representing self; Tom Farley, Arizona Association Of Realtors; Spencer Kamps, HOME BUILDERS ASSOCIATION OF CENTRAL AZ; James Knupp, AZ DEPT OF REAL ESTATE

All Comments:

victoria martinez, Self: ON JANUARY 23,2020 THERE WAS JURY DEMAND DEFENDANT GOVERNMENT DOUG DUCEY TERMINATED FROM BEING UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT IN ARIZONA STATE OR IN A UNITED STATES . THE BUREAU INDIAN AFFAIRS TERMINATED 01/21/2020 .GOERGE BUSH TERMINATED 01/21/20; Tom Farley, Arizona Association Of Realtors: On behalf of the AZ Assoc of Realtors, we support the continuance of the department of real estate.

3. Sunset Review of the Arizona Office of Tourism

4. Sunset Review of the Arizona Board of Funeral Directors and Embalmers

5. Sunset Review of the Arizona Commission on the Arts

Support:

Dianne McCallister, AZ CITIZENS FOR THE ARTS; Drew Trojanowski, representing self; April Salomon, representing self; Brandy Petrone, ARIZONA COMMUNITY FOUNDATION; Jaime Molera, GREATER PHOENIX LEADERSHIP INC; Russell Jones, representing self; Rusty Foley, representing self; Lorna Romero, representing self; Shelley Cohn, representing self; Patrick McWhortor, representing self

All Comments:

Brandy Petrone, ARIZONA COMMUNITY FOUNDATION: ACF support continuation of the Arizona Commission on the Arts; Russell Jones, Self: As a former State Representative for Yuma County, I appreciate the importance to rural Arizona of the Commission and the grants to support the arts around the State, especially those areas that lack wealthy donors to support the creative activities o; Rusty Foley, Self: I am a lifelong Arizonan and arts patron, contributor and advocate. I know firsthand the remarkable work the arts commission does with arts groups, esp. for the economy, youth, veterans care, seniors and others. It is critical to our state.; Lorna Romero, Self: As a Board Member of Arizona Citizens for the Arts, I encourage the committee to support the reauthorization of the Arts Commission.; Shelley Cohn, Self: As a former executive director of the agency and having participated in three

sunset audits, I have seen the quality community work done by the agency and believe they have documented the value to the services and programs that they provide; Patrick McWhortor, Self: As CEO of Arizona Citizens for the Arts, I am privy to the impact of artists and arts organizations on our economy and quality of life. Arts Commission funds are the lifeblood for that impact and thus I urge you to recommend continuation.

ARIZONA STATE LEGISLATURE
Fifty-fifth Legislature - Second Regular Session

COMMITTEE ATTENDANCE RECORD

COMMITTEE ON HOUSE COMMITTEE OF REFERENCE – Sunset Reviews

CHAIRMAN: Jeff Weninger VICE-CHAIRMAN: Joseph Chaplik

DATE	01/11/22	/22	/22	/22	/22
CONVENED	2:53pm	m	m	m	m
RECESSED					
RECONVENED					
ADJOURNED	4:20pm				
MEMBERS					
Carter	✓				
Chávez	✓				
Cook	✓				
Espinoza	✓				
Kaiser	✓				
Liguori	✓				
Meza	✓				
Wilmeth	✓				
Chaplik, Vice-Chairman	✓				
Weninger, Chairman	✓				

✓ Present --- Absent exc Excused

ARIZONA HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Fifty-fifth Legislature - Second Regular Session

ROLL CALL VOTE

COMMITTEE ON

Commerce – Committee of Reference

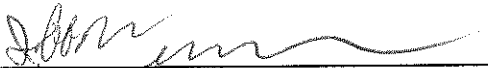
Dept of
Real Estate

DATE January 11, 2022

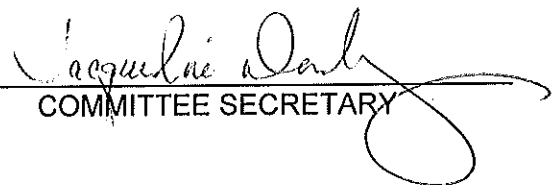
RECOMMENDATION: continued for 8 years

	PASS	AYE	NAY	PRESENT	ABSENT
Carter	XX	✓			
Chávez		✓			
Cook					✓
Espinoza		✓			
Kaiser		✓			
Liguori		✓			
Meza		✓			
Wilmeth		✓			
Chaplik, Vice-Chairman		✓			
Weninger, Chairman		✓			
		9	0	0	1

APPROVED:



JEFF WENINGER, Chairman
JOSEPH CHAPLIK, Vice-Chairman

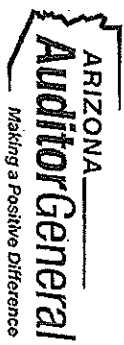

COMMITTEE SECRETARY

ATTACHMENT 4

Arizona Department of Real Estate

Presenter: Marc Owen

Date: January 11, 2022



Department responsibilities

- Licensing of salespersons, brokers, and brokerages
 - 89,000 total licensees
- Complaint handling
 - 584 complaints
- Auditing brokerages
 - 140 audits

Problems identified

- Selection process did not ensure high-risk brokerages were audited
- Department audited some brokerages that did not meet its reported selection criteria
- Selection criteria were not documented

Department made improvements during audit

- Developed new audit selection process
- Documented risk factors
- Established an ongoing review of selection process

Key recommendations

- Use risk-based approach for selecting brokerages
- Evaluate selection process

Additional problems identified

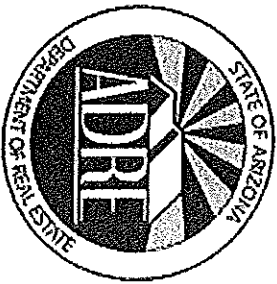
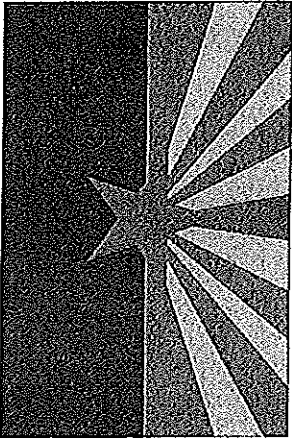
- Did not investigate complaints in accordance with its policies and procedures
 - No supervisory review
- Did not consistently administer discipline
 - Did not use disciplinary matrix

Key recommendations

- Resolve complaints according to policy and procedure
- Modify policies and procedures to ensure supervisory review of all complaints and that staff use disciplinary matrix

Other recommendations

- Fee collection for subdivision inspections
- Confirm validity of fingerprint clearance cards
- Conflict-of-interest policies and procedures



Arizona Department of Real Estate Overview



ADRE Overview

The Department of Real Estate licenses and regulates real estate, cemetery and membership camping brokers and salespersons. It approves and monitors pre-licensing instruction, examinations, and continuing education courses. It maintains oversight of approved schools to ensure the quality content of their courses, the competence of their instructors, and the quality and timeliness of the materials being taught.

The Department oversees the activities of licensees, investigates complaints against licensees and land developers, participates in administrative hearings, and administers the Homeowners Association Dispute Process.

The Department also receives applications for the issuance of subdivision approvals and regulates the sale of subdivisions, unsubdivided lands, timeshares, condominiums, membership campgrounds and cemeteries.



ADRE Overview

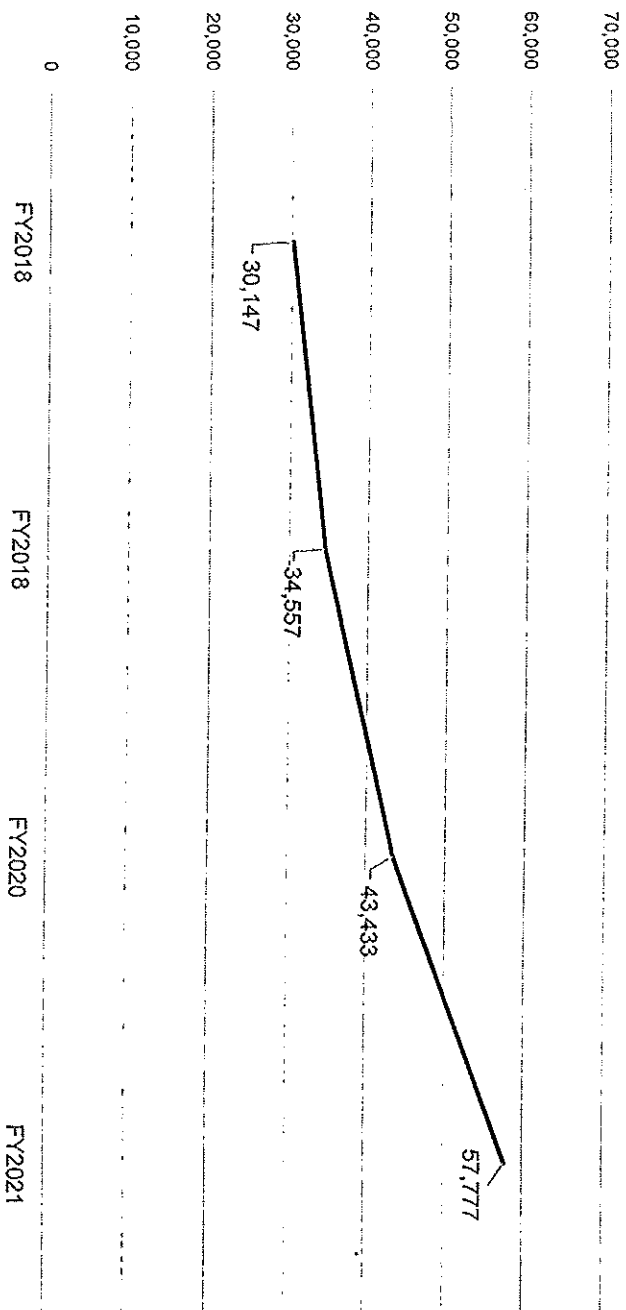
	FY 2018	FY 2019	FY 2020	FY 2021	FY 2022
Appropriation	\$3,028,000	\$2,914,700	\$2,909,500	\$2,997,600	\$2,922,100
Revenue – GF Contribution	\$3,877,929	\$4,133,162	\$3,845,385	\$3,994,008	TBD
Avg. Filled FTE	31.25	26	27	25	25





Online Services Usage

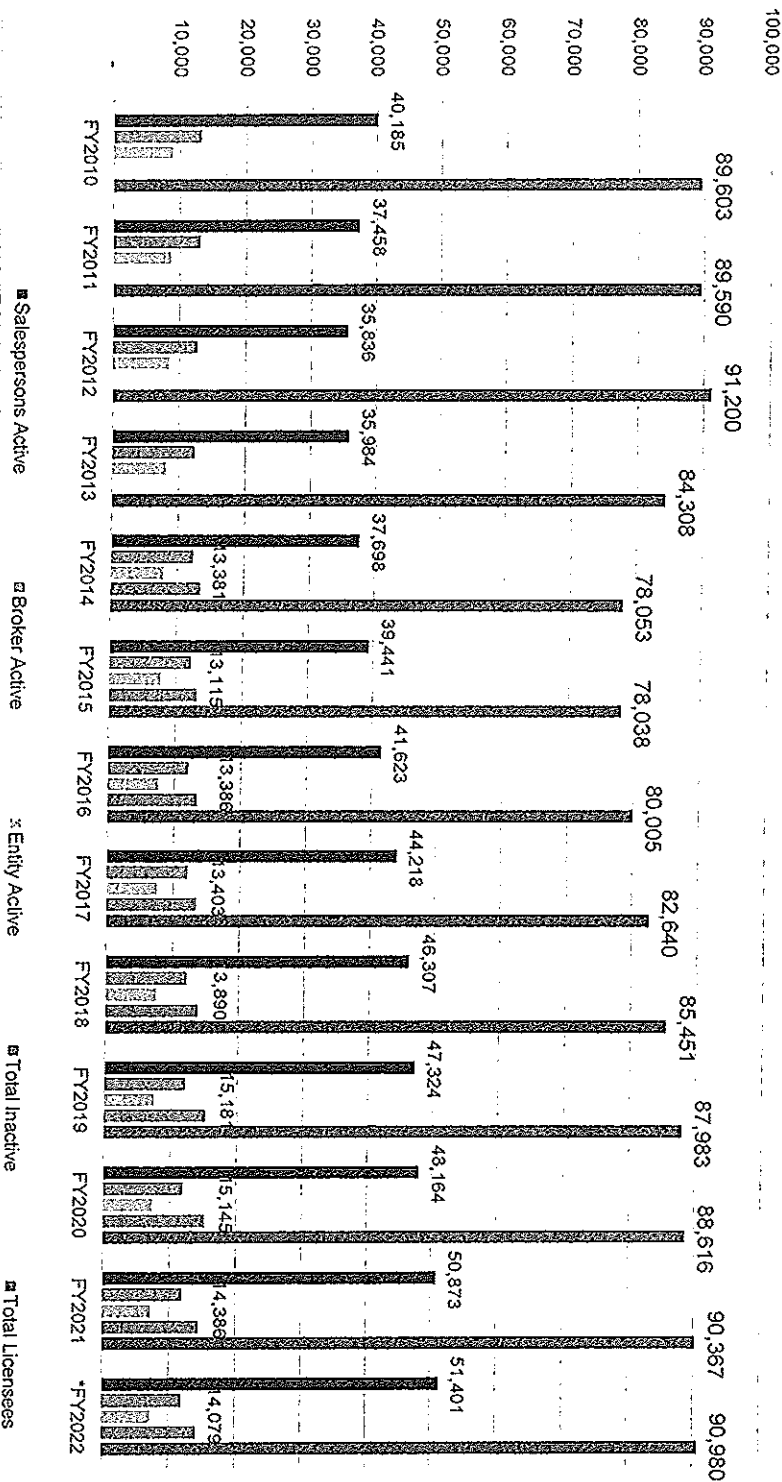
Online Message Center



Includes:
Message Center – Public
Licensee Login – Licensees
Educator Portal – School Administrators



Arizona Real Estate Licensee Numbers





ADRE Overview

Timeframes

- Original License
- Renewal License
- Entity
- Subdivision Public Report
- Amended Public Report

Statute Allows

- 60 days
- 60 days
- 120 days
- 100 days
- 60 days

Actual

- Avg. 1 day
- Avg. 1 day
- Avg. < 5 days
- Avg. 2 days
- Avg. 3 days

The Department of Real Estate will continue to:

- Focus on implementing the remaining recommendations in progress
- Focus on delivering quality timely services to our customers
- Focus on improving online services available
- Focus on the Department's statutory purpose to protect the public interest through licensure and regulation of the real estate profession in this state.

ARIZONA HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Fifty-fifth Legislature - Second Regular Session

ROLL CALL VOTE

COMMITTEE ON

Commerce – Committee of Reference

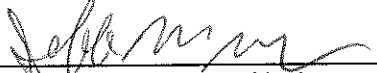
Dept of
Tourism

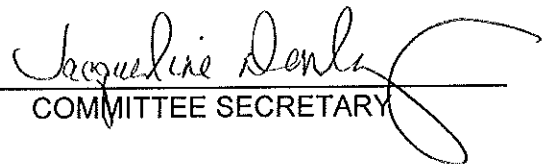
DATE January 11, 2022

RECOMMENDATION: continue for 8 years

	PASS	AYE	NAY	PRESENT	ABSENT
Carter		✓			
Chávez		✓			
Cook					✓
Espinoza		✓			
Kaiser		✓			
Liguori		✓			
Meza		✓			
Wilmeth		✓			
Chaplik, Vice-Chairman		✓			
Weninger, Chairman		✓			
		9	0	0	1

APPROVED:


JEFF WENINGER, Chairman
JOSEPH CHAPLIK, Vice-Chairman


COMMITTEE SECRETARY

ATTACHMENT 7

Arizona Office of Tourism

Presenter: Rosa Ellis

Date: January 11, 2022



Key responsibilities

- Promoting tourism State-wide
- Distributing monies to other tourism organizations in the State for advertising, marketing, and tourism promotion
- Example: Destination Marketing Organizations (DMOs) promote tourism in a designated city, town, or region,

Tourism promotion projects

Did the Office's spending on joint tourism promotional projects comply with State requirements?

Problem identified

- Did not comply with State requirements when spending more than \$81,000 on sponsorships, trade shows, and journalist travel
- Did not complete required cost-benefit analyses, obtain legal counsel review, and/or maintain detailed receipts

Why this matters

- Help ensure that public monies are used for valid public purposes
- State travel and food and beverage reimbursement rates are not exceeded

Key recommendation

- Comply with State requirements for spending public monies for promotional projects
- Consult ADOA-GAO and implement policies and supervisory review processes

Maricopa County tourism promotion revenue distributions

Did the Office monitor and account for
Maricopa County hotel and bed tax
tourism revenues it distributed, as
required?

Maricopa County tourism promotion program requirements

- Office distributes Maricopa County hotel and bed tax tourism revenues for Maricopa County tourism promotion
- DMOs required to apply annually and submit proposed spending plans for review and approval
- DMOs required to submit spending plans changes for review and approval

Problem identified

- Nearly \$41,000 in DMO spending plan changes not reviewed and approved as required
- Did not review spending during or at the end of fiscal year 2020 as required

Why this matters

- Public monies Office distributed at risk of misuse, loss, or theft
- Organizations at risk of overspending or having unaccounted for public money

Key recommendations

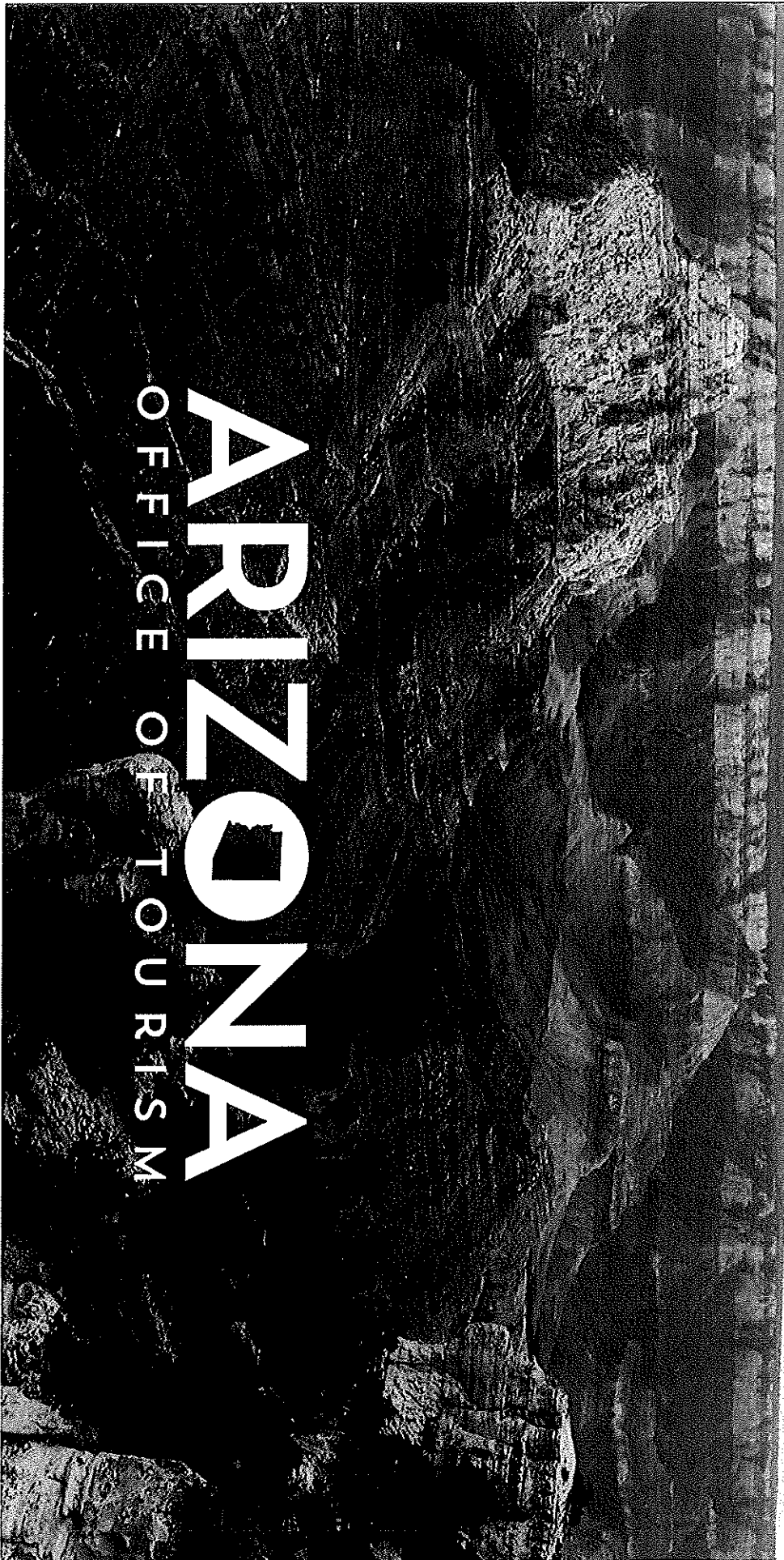
- Comply with State requirements for accounting for monies it distributes
- Formalize change request process
- Standardize reporting templates

Office has established processes related to statutory objectives

- Distributing tourism monies to rural DMOs
- Measuring effectiveness of its advertising and marketing campaigns
- Selecting major cities and metro areas to focus its advertising and marketing campaigns

Recommended improvements to Office processes

- Conflict-of-interest process
- Incorporating long-term economic and environmental impacts in its existing strategic planning process
- Procurement process



Arizona Office of Tourism - Who We Are

Our Vision: Create an Arizona experience that captures and nurtures the hearts and minds of people who call it home and travelers in search of extraordinary adventure and natural wonders.

Our Mission: We stabilize and strengthen local economies, protect environmental and cultural resources, create a meaningful visitor experience and enhance the quality of life for Arizonans through tourism collaboration, promotion and development.

Our Brand Pillars:

- Culinary
- Outdoor Adventure
- Heritage & Culture
- Wellness

ARIZONA
OFFICE OF TOURISM

Arizona Office of Tourism - Research

Arizona Tourism in 2020

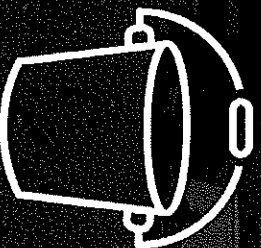
32.1 million \$15 billion
Overnight Visitors Travel Spending



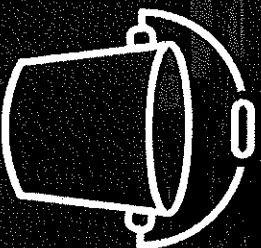
ARIZONA
OFFICE OF TOURISM

Arizona Office of Tourism - Funding

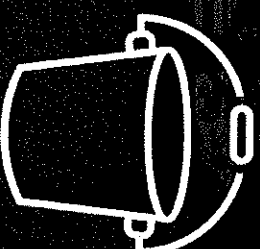
Typical Funding Categories



General Fund



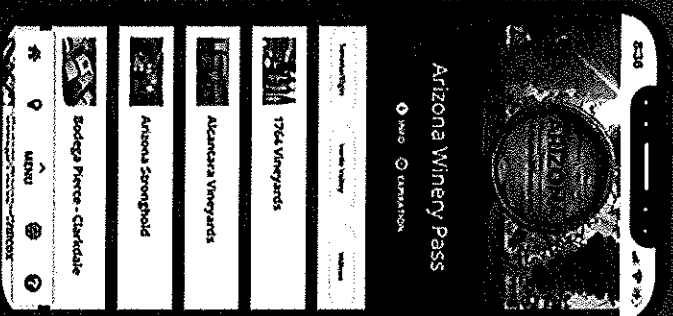
Tribal Gaming
Revenues



Maricopa Co. Prop
302 Revenues

ARIZONA
OFFICE OF TOURISM

Arizona Office of Tourism - Typical Projects



ARIZONA
OFFICE OF TOURISM

Arizona Office of Tourism - Recovery Projects

**Rediscover
open spaces**

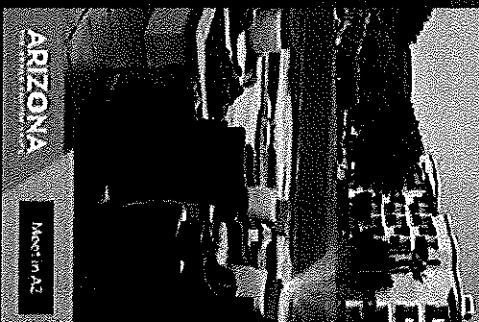


ARIZONA
THE GRAND CANON OF THE

Rediscover AZ

White Pocket, Vermilion Cliffs National Monument

**Spread out.
And still
come together.**



ARIZONA

Made in AZ

**NO. 1
PLAN AHEAD
& PREPARE**

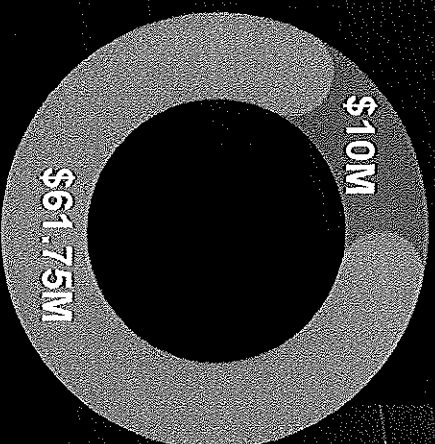


There's no time for a slow start. You have to
Arizona. Planning ahead and preparing for the
state's future. Whether it's a major event or
a small business, we'll be there to help you
plan for the future.

ARIZONA
AZ

Arizona Office of Tourism

ARPA FUNDS



ARIZONA
OFFICE OF TOURISM

Audit Findings & AOT Response

Finding 1

- 2 Recommendations / 2 In Progress

Finding 2

- 5 Recommendations / 4 Complete, 1 In Progress

Finding 3

- 2 Recommendations / 2 Complete

Sunset Factor 2

- 1 Recommendation / 1 In Progress

Sunset Factor 12

- 1 Recommendation / 1 Complete

A black and white photograph of a dense evergreen forest. A path or clearing leads from the foreground into the distance, flanked by tall, dark trees. The sky is visible in the upper portion of the image.

ARIZONA

OFFICE OF TOURISM

ARIZONA HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Fifty-fifth Legislature - Second Regular Session

ROLL CALL VOTE

COMMITTEE ON

Commerce – Committee of Reference

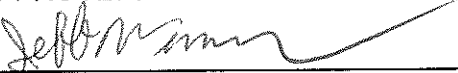
Board of
Funeral
Directors

DATE January 11, 2022

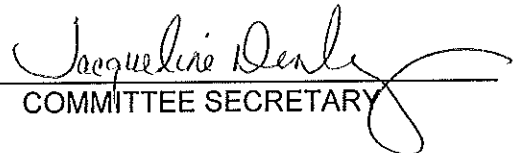
RECOMMENDATION: continue agency for 2 years

	PASS	AYE	NAY	PRESENT	ABSENT
Carter		✓			
Chávez		✓			
Cook		✓			
Espinoza		✓			
Kaiser		✓			
Liguori		✓			
Meza		✓			
Wilmeth		✓			
Chaplik, Vice-Chairman		✓			
Weninger, Chairman		✓			
		10	Ø	Ø	Ø

APPROVED:



JEFF WENINGER, Chairman
JOSEPH CHAPLIK, Vice-Chairman

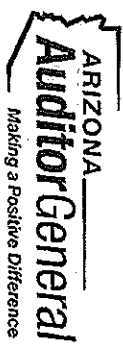

COMMITTEE SECRETARY

ATTACHMENT 10

Arizona Board of Funeral Directors and Embalmers

Presenter: Marc Owen

Date: January 11, 2022



Board's key regulatory responsibilities

- Licensing and registering funeral professionals and businesses
- Inspecting funeral establishments and crematories
- Investigating and adjudicating complaints
- Providing information to the public

Board did not ensure applicants met all requirements

- Did not always perform criminal history records check
- Did not inspect all businesses before licensure
- Did not verify that some applicants met experience requirements

Board did not verify surety bond requirement met

- Approved funeral establishments to sell prearranged funeral agreements **without** ensuring surety bond amounts met statutory requirements
- Prearranged funeral agreement involves payment for services before death
- Surety bonds protect customers who have purchased prearranged funeral agreements

Causes for these problems

- Misinterpreted licensing requirements
- Applications did not include all requirements
- Lacked comprehensive guidance and supervisory review process

Key recommendations

- Revise applications and develop policies that address all requirements
- Implement a supervisory review process

Board did not properly perform inspections

- Some requirements not assessed during inspections
- Inspections inaccurately documented

Some inspections not conducted timely

- 5 of 30 businesses we reviewed were overdue for an inspection
- 3 of these businesses had not been inspected for more than 7 years

Key recommendations

- Conduct timely inspections that address all requirements
- Accurately document inspections
- Develop policies and procedures

Other recommendations

- Continue to implement new conflict-of-interest policies and procedures
- Review fee amounts

ARIZONA HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Fifty-fifth Legislature - Second Regular Session

ROLL CALL VOTE

COMMITTEE ON

Commerce – Committee of Reference

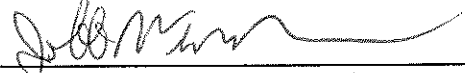
Commission
on the Arts

DATE January 11, 2022

RECOMMENDATION: continue for 8 years

	PASS	AYE	NAY	PRESENT	ABSENT
Carter	✓	✓			
Chávez		✓			
Cook		✓			
Espinoza		✓			
Kaiser		✓			
Liguori		✓			
Meza		✓			
Wilmeth		✓			
Chaplik, Vice-Chairman		✓			
Weninger, Chairman		✓			
		10	0	0	0

APPROVED:



JEFF WENINGER, Chairman
JOSEPH CHAPLIK, Vice-Chairman



COMMITTEE SECRETARY

ATTACHMENT 12

ARIZONA COMMISSION ON THE ARTS

One of 56 state and jurisdictional arts agencies across the United States, the Arizona Commission on the Arts is a 54-year-old agency of the State of Arizona and a leading force in the creative and professional development of Arizona's arts sector. Through robust programs, research initiatives and strategic grantmaking, the Arts Commission catalyzes arts-based partnerships that strengthen Arizona communities through the arts.

BACKGROUND

Established in 1967

Reauthorized in 1982, 1992, 2002, and 2012

GOVERNANCE

15-member board of non-salaried, Governor-appointed commissioners.

PURPOSE & FUNCTION

Statutorily required duties

- Encourage the study and presentation of the arts
- Encourage public participation in and appreciation of the arts
- Encourage public interest in Arizona's cultural heritage
- Expand Arizona's cultural resources

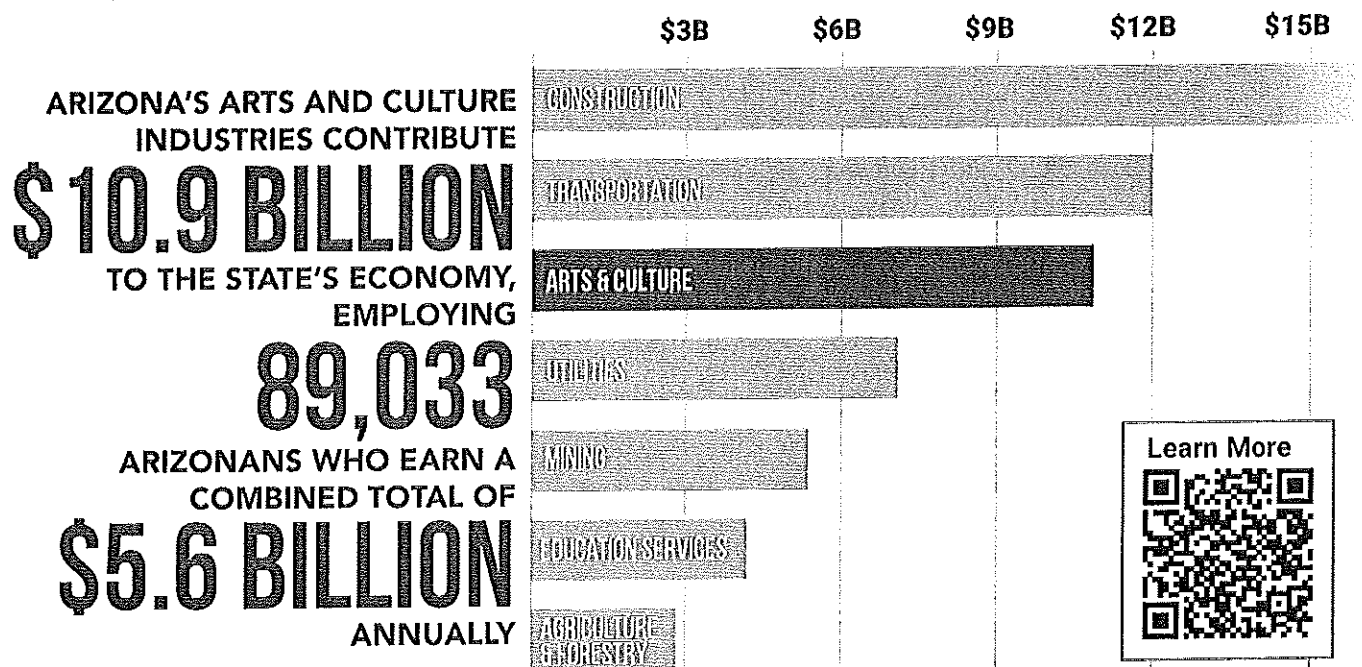
Primary Functions

- Provide Leadership
- Administer programs and services
- Award grants
- Compete for, receive, and disburse federal funding

SINCE 1967, THE ARTS COMMISSION HAS
RECEIVED AND ADMINISTERED OVER
\$40 MILLION
IN FEDERAL ARTS FUNDING

ARIZONA'S ARTS & CULTURE SECTOR

The chart below measures the economic impact of Arizona's arts and cultural production, both commercial and nonprofit, in comparison to other industries in the state.

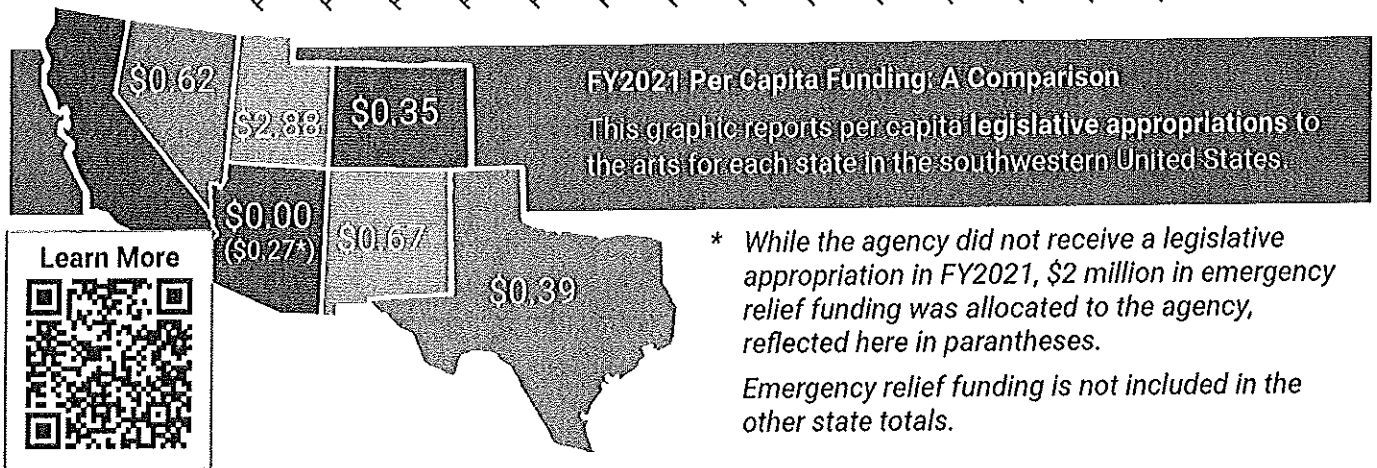
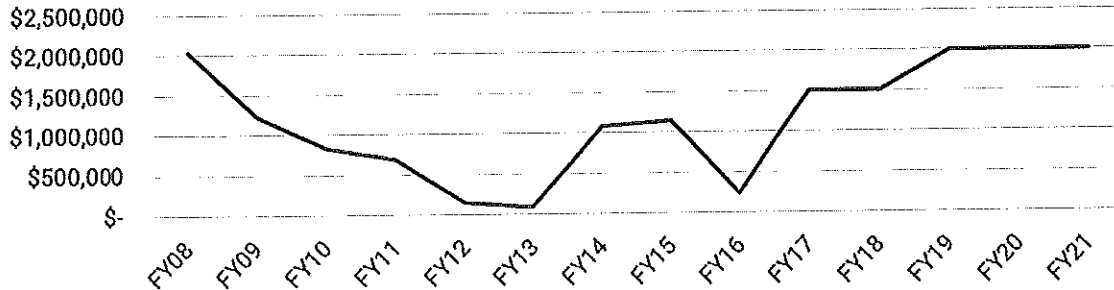


INCREASED EFFICIENCY AMIDST DIMINISHED RESOURCES

AGENCY BUDGET

Legislative appropriations, FY2008-FY2021

The graph below presents legislative appropriations and pandemic-era relief funds to the Arizona Commission on the Arts since the recession.



AGENCY GRANTMAKING

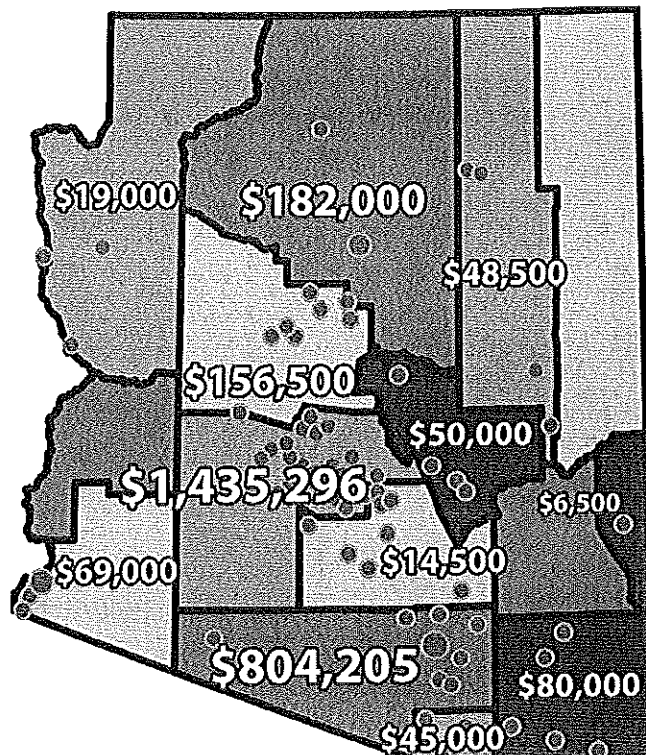
IN FY2021

497 GRANTS

TOTALING

\$2,910,501

WERE AWARDED THROUGHOUT THE STATE



GRANT PROGRAMS

Community Investment Grants

General operating support for nonprofit arts and cultural organizations

Festival Grants

Funding for community arts festivals

Youth Arts Engagement

& Lifelong Arts Engagement Grants

Funding for high quality arts programs for learners across the aging spectrum

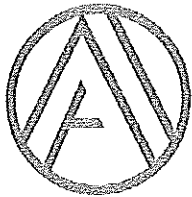
Research and Development Grants

Funding support for Arizona artists as they work to advance their artistic practice and expand their creative horizons

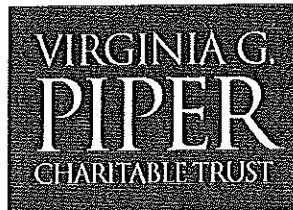
Artist Opportunity Grants

Professional development support for creative workers and entrepreneurs

PUBLIC PRIVATE PARTNERSHIPS



ARIZONA
COMMUNITY
FOUNDATION



FLINN
FOUNDATION

ASU Herberger Institute for
Design and the Arts
Arizona State University

THE UNIVERSITY OF ARIZONA
POETRY CENTER

PUBLIC VERSUS PRIVATE FUNDING

PUBLIC FUNDING VALUES

Fairness

Public funding should reach all communities; we have a particular responsibility to rural, remote, and otherwise underserved communities.

Access

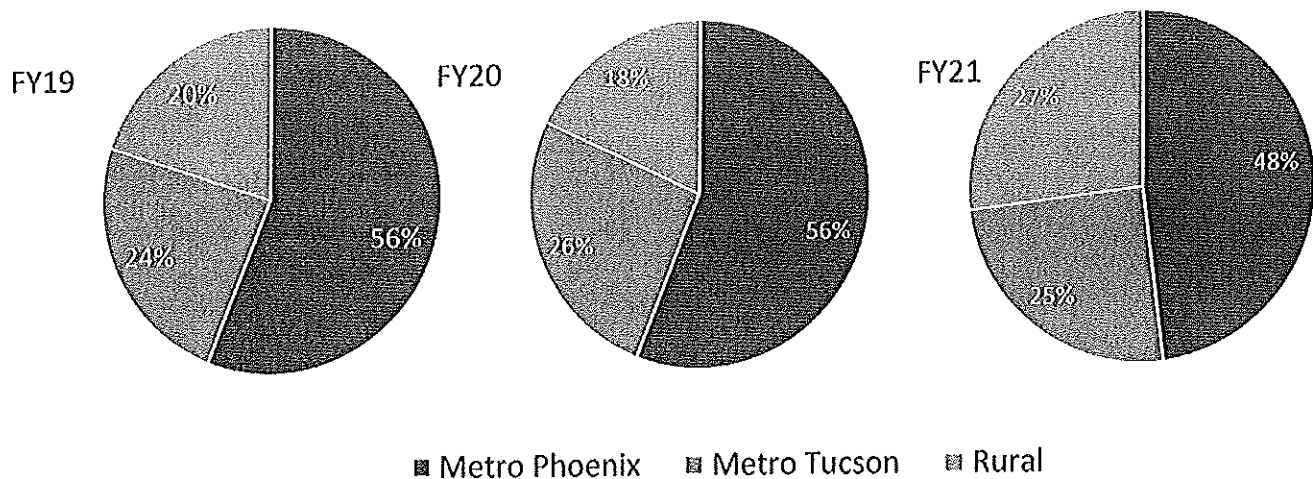
All Arizonans should have meaningful opportunities to participate in and experience the arts and public funding helps remove barriers to public engagement, such as those linked to socio-economic status, geographic isolation, disability, and age.

Transparency

Public funds should be distributed transparently and in accordance with the public interest.

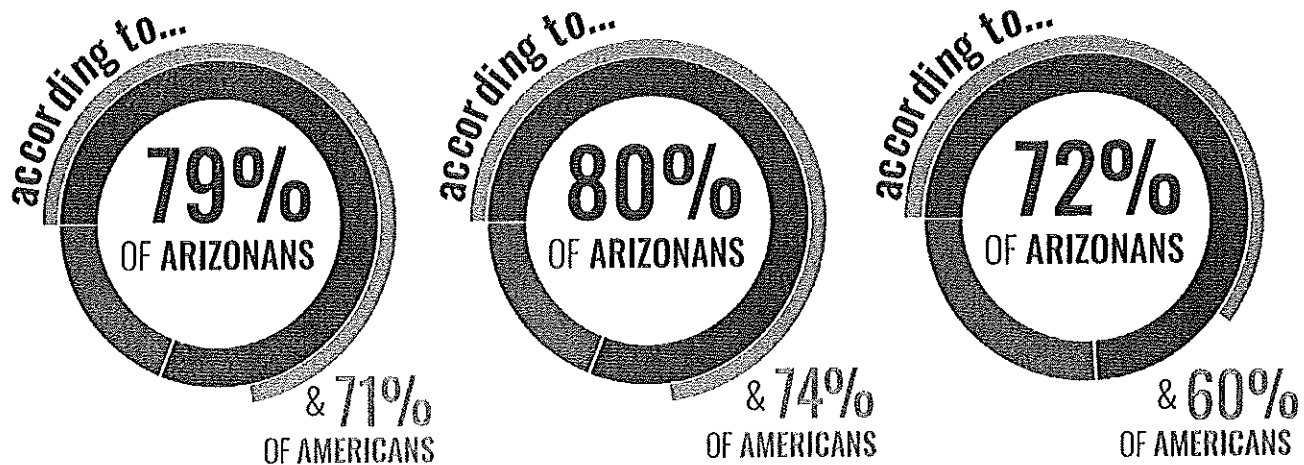
GRANT DOLLARS DISTRIBUTION, RURAL/METRO FY2019 - FY2021

The pie charts below illustrate how the Arts Commission has strategically adjusted its grantmaking in the past three years to ensure fairer distribution throughout the state. In FY2021, 27% of grant dollars were directed to communities outside Arizona's major metros.



PUBLIC OPINION ON THE ARTS

Recent polling reveals that a vast majority of Americans consider the arts a vital resource, contributing to personal well-being, professional success, and societal health. This overwhelmingly positive attitude toward the arts is especially evident in Arizona, where survey results exceeded national averages in all categories.



"THE ARTS HAVE A SOCIAL IMPACT, IMPROVING THE QUALITY AND LIVABILITY OF MY COMMUNITY."

"THE ARTS HELP STUDENTS PERFORM BETTER ACADEMICALLY."

"THE ARTS INDUSTRY IS GOOD FOR THE ECONOMY AND SUPPORTS JOBS."

Learn more about how Arizonans view the arts





**MEALS ON WHEELS
PRESCOTT**

TOGETHER, WE CAN DELIVER.

Prescott Meals On Wheels

1280A East Rosser Street

Prescott, AZ 86301

Telephone 928-445-7630 Fax 928-445-1725

www.PrescottMealsOnWheels.com

Please remember Prescott Meals On Wheels in your will and trusts.

January 7, 2022

Arizona House Commerce Committees
Arizona State Capitol Complex
1700 W Washington St
Phoenix, AZ 85007

To the membership of the Arizona House Commerce Committee:

I am writing in support of the reauthorization of the Arizona Commission on the Arts.

In my role as executive director of Prescott Meals On Wheels I am able to state from experience the positive role the Arts Commission has played in the wellbeing of the adults we serve through our program.

One of the greatest challenges our program, and others like ours in rural communities, face are those posed by social isolation. Social isolation is associated with adverse health consequences including depression, poor sleep quality, impaired executive function, accelerated cognitive decline, poor cardiovascular function and impaired immunity at every stage of life.¹ Additionally, loneliness and social isolation can be as damaging to health as smoking 15 cigarettes a day² and the senior suicide rate in Yavapai County trends higher than the national average.³

For several years, and in numerous ways, we have used creativity and the arts as an intervention for social isolation. Our efforts would not have been possible without the expertise, guidance and resources of the Arizona Commission on the Arts. The Arts Commission has been instrumental in initial funding, introductions to critical stakeholders and providing us with the guidance to imagine what is possible. Without the agency I doubt that we would have gotten our various creative aging programs off the ground.

These programs utilize visual arts, movement, dance, writing and poetry to engage homebound seniors, improving their quality of life through connection and creativity.

As one participant shared, they felt more engaged with others through the program:

¹ <https://www.apa.org/monitor/2019/05/ce-corner-isolation>

² <https://www.hrsa.gov/enews/past-issues/2019/january-17/loneliness-epidemic>

³ <https://sedona.biz/suicides-in-yavapai-county-significantly-higher-than-national-average/>



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"It means the world to me that that someone cared about what I had to say. It had been at least 10 years, since when I was working as a social worker, that that had happened. I was overwhelmed with joy and felt very connected to my peers."

From another participant, Bill, a veteran diagnosed with end-stage emphysema and COPD who chose to work with a writer/poet:

"I absolutely loved it. I had been writing my own eulogy and I completed it. I redid the whole thing with help from my arts mentor. I am really happy with it. This program is just wonderful and I hope they continue it."

The arts have never been discretionary. The arts are critical to the vitality and wellbeing of us as individuals, as communities, as regions and states.

The mission of the Arizona Commission on the Arts is bold, relevant and necessary; create opportunities for all Arizonans to participate in and experience the arts. Without the Arts Commission's hand of encouragement, resources and support for every single Arizonan who has a desire to participate in artistic engagement, programs like ours that reach vulnerable populations would be diminished.

In addition to the cultural richness the arts provide, it is very important to consider the economic impact the arts contribute in our state. The arts – concerts, museums, festivals, theatrical productions - are destination drivers that generate significant revenue for the communities in which they reside and the state as a whole. We see this especially in our rural Prescott community and the Arizona Commission on the Arts is a multi-faceted resource for many, if not most, of these endeavors.

As you consider the history, contributions and accomplishments of the Arizona Commission on the Arts, my hope is that you will reauthorize the agency to continue their work with the same dedication, high standards and vision that they have successfully demonstrated since 1967.

In the spirit of creativity,

Bert Elizabeth Ijams
Executive Director